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ABSTRACT

Parents whose children were experiencing behavioral problems at a southwestern U.S. elementary school were at a loss as to how to effectively manage their children's behavior both in and out of home. The effect of a lack of discipline transcended into the classroom which ultimately disrupted the learning environment. This practicum created a support group for these parents, and was designed to educate parents on effective discipline strategies that would enable them to facilitate behavior modification without starting a negative discipline cycle. The project entailed an 8-month program during which parents shared concerns, problems, and solutions with one another. The goal of the project was to help parents learn to teach their children how to behave in a socially acceptable manner both in and out of the classroom. At the end of the project, the majority of the parents had implemented the new strategies with some degree of success. All the parents reacted positively to the support group and testified to feeling empowered to handle their children's behavior more effectively. (A copy of the post parent support group survey and 45 references are included.) (Author/AA)

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ED 387 237

Helping Parents Deal with the Discipline of their Children Through a Parenting Support Group

by

Edna McCree-Weekly
Cluster 52

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A Practicum II Report Presented to the
Ed.D Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Edna Marie McCree-Weekly under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved

June 9, 1995

Date of Final Approval of Report

June L. DeLano

June Delano, Ph.D., Adviser

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I would like to thank all the parents and grandparents, who volunteered their time and gave willingly to my parenting support group. They brought love and attention as well.

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ABSTRACT

Helping Parents Deal with the Discipline of their Children Through a Parenting Support Group. McCree-Weekly, Edna M., 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Inservice Training/ Elementary/ Day Care/ Nursery School

Parents, whose children experienced behavioral problems at school, were often at a loss as to how to effectively manage their children's behavior both in and out of the home. The effect of a lack of discipline transcended into the classroom which ultimately disrupted the learning environment.

The goal of this practicum was to create a parenting support group which consisted of parents, teachers, school administrators, and other community members. Furthermore, the practicum was designed to educate parents on effective discipline strategies which would enable them to facilitate behavior modification without starting a negative discipline cycle. The project entailed a eight-month program where parents shared concerns, problems, and solutions with one another.

At the end of the project, the majority of the parents had implemented the new strategies with some degree of success. All the parents reacted positively to the support group and testified to feeling empowered to handle their children's behavior more effectively.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The immediate setting of this practicum is a large city in the southwest region of the United States. This area is one of the fastest growing communities in the nation and has been recognized as one of the top 100 cities in America for population growth. Its present population is approximately 250,000 and has doubled every decade since 1940.

The community has many aspects which make it a desirable place to live, boasting of a strong economy with a well developed economic base. For example, eight of Fortune Magazine top 500 manufacturers are located in the area. In addition, a wide diversity of electronics, food processing operations, automotive testing, safety systems, propulsion equipment, helicopters, and heavy machinery firms play supportive roles in the manufacturing economy. Furthermore, the area offers a broad range of community and cultural facilities. There are five museums which are

nationally recognized featuring cultural art and artifacts from Native American civilizations.

However, the community is feeling the effects of environmental change and a growing increase in population as new firms and corporate offices are moving into the state from surrounding states. Due to the increase in population, many farmlands are now being replaced by housing developments. As a result of shrinking agricultural lands, the residents are becoming more dependent on the importation of crops from other states.

The socio-economic range is middle to upper middle class families. Many middle to upper middle class families seek a safe, enjoyable, and comfortable environment. Residents from surrounding areas which do not enjoy the same low crime rate are quickly migrating to this area. The city planners foresee the area growing at an average rate of 4% over the next decade. Thus, the population has a broad ethnic, social, and economic range with cultural representation of whites, blacks, hispanics, asians, and native americans.

The Writer's Work Setting

The present setting is an independent, non-denominational, nonprofit, christian school, providing both quality education and religious training. The school was established in 1983 on two acres of church land. The school has eleven portables which house the administrative office, library, and classes from preschool through grade eight. The annual budget is $273,176.79 dollars. The median teacher salary is $12,000, which is below the median range salary of the public school teacher within the area. The school enrollment of 189 students comes mainly from a 15 mile radius of neighborhoods ranging from lower-middle to upper-middle socioeconomic strata. The school seeks a diversity of students from all races and from all socio-economic levels. The school population is heterogeneous which reflects the ethnic representations of the surrounding community: 86% white; 9% black; 5% hispanic.

Furthermore, the faculty turnover in both full and part-time positions has been low. The administrative staff consists of an administrator (co-founder), and an assistant administrator, and the Director of Early Childhood. Although it is a private institution, the school promotes the philosophy of community

involvement. That is, in order to be competitive with the public schools, the target school follows the same hiring policy of the public schools. Consequently, the faculty consists of 10 state-certificated teachers, counselors, and administrators. Facilitating the community spirit, the teachers welcome the open door policy between staff and administrators. In addition, the teachers enjoy the opportunity to be creative in an individual style of teaching and receive support from the administration.

The school maintains an atmosphere which encourages academic preparation for higher education as well as character development for social integration. The faculty and staff provide programs and learning activities which motivate students to achieve maximum potential for intellectual, physical, social, and moral growth and development as measured by the standards of the King's James Bible, social parameters, and national education guidelines. The curriculum follows the logical developmental abilities of the students. Children are exposed to the same academic subjects which their counterparts in public school are learning, but the students study from the Christian viewpoint.

The basic subjects studied in addition to the King James Bible are language arts (reading, writing, spelling, english, spanish), math, social studies and

science. The fine arts of music, art and drama are also incorporated into the program. Additionally, a physical education program is provided to promote good health habits.

The Writer's Role and Responsibilities

The writer's role in the work setting is kindergarten elementary science teacher and Director of Early Childhood. The writer works directly with children, teachers, and parents in the kindergarten classroom. The writer's background includes an undergraduate degree in elementary education and a masters degree in business management. In addition, the writer has taught first, third, and fifth grade and has received training in assertive discipline. Also, the writer has 20 years experience in parenting skills. The responsibilities of the teaching position include encouraging students to achieve the academic skills necessary to become productive in a global society. As kindergarten teacher, Director of the Early Childhood department, and a member of the state's foster care review board, the writer has a first-hand view of the present problem. Through observation and research analysis, the writer can readily see the problematic areas in the field of parenting.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Description of the Problem Situation

Parents, whose children experienced behavioral problems at school, were often at a loss as to how to effectively manage their child's behavior both in and out of the home. The evidence that the parents were not effectively managing their children manifested itself in the children's behavior in school. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom was not an uncommon experience for most teachers. However, when the behavior went unchanged and became recurrent, a cycle of punitive discipline and low self esteem and poor academic performance began. Furthermore, the problem was evidenced by the students' lack of response to disciplinary actions taken by the school; consequently, the behavior problem was not effectively remediated and became a disruption to the learning process. After implementing some behavior modification, teachers took note as to whether the behavior modification strategy was effective or not. They found that in some cases, it was

effective whereas in other cases, the same behavior modification was completely ineffective. In cases where the behaviors did not change and were recurrent, parents were asked to respond. Most often the parents expressed a sense of inability on their part to control their own children's behavior. Therefore, the problem ultimately went unresolved, and inappropriate student behaviors continued to be on ongoing problem. Due to the divergence of the teacher's attention and instruction time wastefully spent on classroom management, these behaviors disrupted class activities and impeded the learning process for all the students within the class.

In conclusion, the problem addressed by this report stemmed from the cause of the inappropriate behavior and that was a lack of consistent behavior boundaries in the home. However, it needs to be understood that the parents who were responsible were not conscientiously giving up their responsibility. They were, in fact, at a loss as to how to effectively manage their children's behavior so that appropriate behaviors could transcend from the home into the school.

Documentation of the Problem

In researching the concerns of the parents, teachers, and administrators, the writer confirmed the existence of the problem with a variety of evidence. First, parents were

honest about their frustration in dealing with discipline problems, and they expressed their needs to the principal and support staff about a parenting support group. Many felt that they alone could not solve the problem, and the resources available were limited due to time constraints and accessibility.

Moreover, the need for school intervention in home discipline was evidenced by the children's reaction to behavior modification implemented in the classroom. For example, the children showed emotional reactions to school discipline such as withdrawals, aggression, day-dreaming, and difficulty in concentrating. Certainly these were not the goals of the school when implementing behavior modification and served to undermine the intent to facilitate education.

Parents of students who received disciplinary action admitted unreservedly to having no or inéffective behavior modification strategies at home. Furthermore, the parents of students who received disciplinary action admitted in parent-teacher conferences to being uneducated about effective parenting.

Many of the parents complained that there was not time to work on behavior modification. They looked for the fastest and easiest means of stopping the behavior at that moment. Most often this entailed yelling at the children or spanking them which had limited results. Furthermore, many

of the parents were single parents or had a number of children at home and did not spend sufficient time establishing and enforcing behavior boundaries.

Causative Analysis

The problem of parents feeling at a loss as to how to manage their children's behavior had a number of causes. The lack of empowerment stemmed from a variety of sources.

Firstly, parents were uneducated about and/or had received no training in effective parenting strategies. They simply did not know the difference between a strategy which would reap a long-term effect and one which would have an immediate effect but did influence the child on a long-basis. They did not recognize the importance of consistency in child management and allowed their reactions to change according to their mood, the immediate environment, the caretaker in charge, or any number of variables.

By not establishing consistent behavior boundaries in the home environment, the parents sent mixed signals to the children. Consequently, the children became confused at the varying levels of behavior acceptance. This started the cycle of testing the parents and often a power struggle ensued which exacerbated the problem.

Another important consideration was that parents felt alone in their crisis with their children. Some parents were convinced that their children alone behave in this way,

or they felt ashamed to confide in a professional educator or counselor, fearing judgement on their parenting abilities. Many also resisted any interference from someone outside of the home, believing that the family should be able to take care of itself. They failed to acknowledge that with the increase of stress in the society, the family must seek out a support system which would help it cope with the changing nature of the American Family.

Another contributing factor was the lack of resources provided by the school. At the time, the school did not offer an intervention program to help parents manage their children's behavior more effectively. If the school was going to expect some support from the family, then it had to also provide support. A school could not realistically expect that the parents of the students would do whatever is necessary to change their child's behavior in school if the parents could not manage their child's behavior at home. Moreover, many parents felt that teaching behavior was the school's responsibility and that the parents should reap the benefits of behavior modification by having a better behaved child in the home. It was important to recognize that the school and the parents must network together to effectively change behavior patterns on a permanent basis. Consequently, the teachers, upon recognizing the lack of education among parents, addressed the problem through them, not necessarily through the children.

Another contributing factor was that in many cases, the children ran the household through their bad behavior, and parents had lost control in reference to managing their children's behavior as supported by the literature. Thus, the children had learned how to manipulate adults through bad behavior. Since this system had worked for them, they were positively reinforced to continue the bad behavior.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The problem that the writer addressed was that parents needed assistance in working with their children at home. Because of the changing nature of the American family unit, schools are experiencing an increase in child behavior problems. Disruptive behavior impedes the learning process by interrupting instruction and distracting the teacher. According to Lewis (1986) disruptive classroom behavior is defined as a defiant attitude toward teacher authority, aggression toward peers, and refusal to participate in classroom activities.

The literature affirms the direct cause and effect relationship between academic achievement and home environment. Because children spend almost one-third of their day at school, changes stemming from the home environment manifest themselves in disruptive behavior in the classroom, creating a vicious cycle of low self esteem (Wanat, 1992). The basic institution through which

children learn who they are, where they fit into society, and what kinds of future they are likely to experience is the family (Epps, 1983). According to Wanat (1992) children have needs that affect the school programs; their achievement may lag as they have trouble concentrating, worry about their family situations, and suffer from poor self concept. As affirmed by Jones (1983) discipline problems are a part of schooling, but the problems start with the parents. It is not uncommon for children to control parents through misbehavior (Lewis, 1986). According to Trotter (1991) inattentive parents are responsible for their children's lack of behavior boundaries.

Consequently, in order to address the problem, a clear understanding of what happens in the home is necessary. Parent attitudes and interactions with their children are influenced by the combination of economic stress, environmental forces, and other critical events which in turn affect the behavior and emotional health of their children (Thompson et al., 1993). According to True and Googins (1984) the education community must notice the effects of changing families on the children's behavior. That is, teachers should look for signs of stress in students which will indicate a problem in the home according to Frederick et al. (1990). Parenting itself can be a generally stressful life event and the manifestation of

major persistent child problems may be the most significant dimension of stress across a range of unpleasant parental effects (Mash & Johnston, 1983). Often a crisis in behavior brings out the incompleteness of a parent's adaptation to the parenting role (Cook et al., 1987).

Adding to the problem is the disruption of the nuclear family. Many families operate under the direction of a single parent (Ourth & Zakariya, 1982). Ourth and Zakariya (1982) state when the number of adults in the home is reduced by half, there are bound to be changes, and some of those changes are pretty predictable. According to True and Googins (1984) the absence of parents affects children's behavior and how that child learns. Broken homes may be blamed for poor achievement and misbehavior. Unfortunately, the absent parent is not fully aware of how crucial his or her role is in this period of the child's life (Archibald, 1982).

Even in families where both parents are living in the family residence, usually both parents are working, and the children spend much time alone or in the care of some caretaker or older sibling (Wanat, 1992). According to Colletta (1991) young mothers especially are at a high risk for maltreatment of their children due to their inability to deal with the stress associated with their childcare responsibilities. Furthermore, Briener and Young (1985) conclude that the mother's interaction has a direct effect

on the child's behavior.

Maternal control and child noncompliance may reflect the typical struggle for autonomy characteristic of developmental stages or they may symptomatic of more pervasive and potentially persistent problems in the mother-child relationship that are often a correlate of childhood behavior problems (Campbell et al., 1986). These problems are exacerbated by the age and maturity of the mother. Young single mothers are described as being "impatient", "insensitive", and "irritable" (Colletta, 1981). However, it is important to note that discipline problems are caused by single-parent environments and a single father is no different than a single mother (Chung & Gray, 1983). These environments lend to a number of causative factors which create a condition of ineffective parenting.

Another contributing element is the socioeconomic level of the family. According to Thompson et al. (1993) children in low-income families have been shown to be even more susceptible to developmental and behavioral problems. Children in families under financial stress have higher rates of identified problem behavior.

A direct cause of behavior problems is cited as the lack of consistency in many parenting structures (Jones, 1987). Consistency is pivotal when addressing the establishment of behavior boundaries. According to Jolly (1985) a child will be difficult when parental behavior is

inconsistent or when different standards are applied by different caretakers. According to Dadds et al. (1987) parents may need training in a range of extra skills which may facilitate their ability to implement their parenting skills across a wide range of child care settings. Of course, parents cannot guarantee their child's happiness; they can, however, provide consistent guidance that will give them every opportunity to make the right choice (Selig & Arroyo, 1989). In addition, Pettie and Bates (1989) affirm that proactive parental involvement may provide an important social developmental context for the prevention of problem behavior in young children.

Just understanding what needs to be done is certainly different than understanding how it can be accomplished. Many parents feel at a loss as to how to manage their children. Jolly (1985) recognizes that the role of the parents is not automatic, simply because an adult has become a father or mother; although, many people talk of child-rearing as though it was a natural instinct with which every individual was born. Consequently, many parents feel their children are out of control and if the parents cannot control inappropriate behaviors at home, the school cannot realistically expect the child to respond to behavior modification in the classroom setting. According to Anderson and Rodriguez (1991) struggling with difficult feelings and episodes that all young children go through can

produce parental stress which impedes effective parenting. Moreover, behavior problems are a major factor in the development of depression in parents, whereas understanding development brings enjoyment, an aspect which is soon conveyed to the child who is helped to succeed (Jolly, 1985). Many of the behaviors commonly exhibited by problem children are perceived by parents as annoying, noxious, and stressful and result in a range of parental coping reactions encompassing overt behavior, cognition, emotions and physiological responses. Therefore, many parents would greatly benefit from some education and training on effective behavior modification Palker (1980).

However, the parents also feel that parenting is their domain and resent any school interference Wanat (1992). The family's cultural parameters may dictate the type of discipline used as well as the reaction to any outside interference. Consequently, discipline and teacher-parent interaction must be culturally sensitive (Trotter, 1991). According to Hale (1986) greater continuity should exist between the behavior of the parent and the behavior of the teacher. One of the reasons white teachers have difficulty motivating and disciplining Black children is the cultural dissonance that occurs when the teachers behave differently from the way the children expect authority figures behave.

Thus, schools have been hesitant to offer counseling and training. In fact according to True and Googins (1984)

children are more apt to model after their parents' behavior than to listen to a teacher's suggestions. Therefore, the teacher's influence is limited without the support of the parents. However, in cases where parents have been offered such support, the programs have been successful. Imperative to the success is the concern that parents must be respected by the school staff and parents' concerns about discipline must be acknowledged (Gonzales, 1986).

Since many parents are working forty hours a week or in the case of single parents who often work more than forty hours, time seems to be a critical issue. However, as suggested by Gray (1984) teaching discipline is one of the most important jobs parents have. Discipline should meet the present needs of the children. Although the nature of the American family is changing, the needs of children remain constant. According to Wolfe et al. (1988) a healthy parent-child relationship provides the child with a critical foundation for development. As society moves toward a family life quite unlike that experienced by their parents and grandparents' generations, many children feel a sense of dislocation (Louv, 1990).

Moreover, not only do parents create the condition which cause inappropriate behaviors from the children, they lack the time to address the problems when they are at home. The time constraint problem is compounded by the number as well as the stress of the responsibilities which they must

attend during those few hours. Consequently, the children receive few if any behavior boundaries and especially critical is the lack of consistency in rule enforcement (Jones, 1987). By not being consistent, the parent is setting up a dynamic which sends mixed signals to the children. That is, the children are unsure of reactions they may receive in any given situation (Isaacs, 1987).

In addition to a lack of education and time constraints, parents also feel alone in their dilemma (Wanat, 1992). Because of the highly mobile society of today, many families are spread all over the country, and it is not uncommon for a single parent to be completely alone with no support system. Parents need both emotional and pragmatic support according to Ourth and Zakariya (1982). However, most often support is lacking, and many parents are ashamed to let anyone know that they are experiencing problems for fear of negative judgement from society. Their concerns are not unrealistic. According to Pettit and Bates (1989) parents who are effective in controlling the behavior of their children are deemed competent and often have children characterized as socially competent. Affirmed by Mash and Johnston (1983) behavior problem children create ongoing stress for mothers that potentially undermines their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to care for their children.

This knowledge in by no means inherent in becoming a

parent. Parents need to learn about the subject of parenting as with any other new skill (Jolly, 1985). According to Bee (1985) parents whose children with behavior problems may abe helped to examine the pattern of their discipline with their children. There is a strong positive relationship between parent involvement and student achievement according to Chavkin (1989). Bennett and Morgan (1988) maintain that there exists a need to teach parents how to interact positively with their children for effective behavior modification. Referring parents to marital counseling may be a positive course for those will low marital adjustment (Noller & Taylor, 1989). However, the educators must remain committed to the objective and not divert attention to other concern. The educational leader should disengage community involvement from trivial matters and move it to substantive issues (Gonzales, 1986).

Disruptive behaviors in the classroom is certainly not a new issue, but new interventive measures need to be addressed. According to Thompson et al. (1993) nearly 20% of all children in the United States have developmental learning or behavioral problems. The objective is to develop self-discipline. Consequently, those parents who are at a loss as to how to effectively manage their children's behavior do not achieve this objective.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and outcomes were projected for this practicum: parents will learn to teach their children how to behave in a socially acceptable manner both in and out of the classroom.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes were as follows:

1. At least 32 of 40 parents will benefit from the support group. 32 parents will answer question 1 with response A; they will answer question 2 with responses A or B; they will answer question 3 with response A (see Appendix).
2. 32 of 40 parents with children who exhibit behavior problems will effectively alter their children's emotional reactions as evidenced by the parent's reaction to questions 4 and 5 on the questionnaire. 32 parents will answer question 4 with response B or C and answer question 5 with response A, B, or C (see Appendix).
3. At least 32 of the 40 parents will implement effective behavior modification at home measured by parent responses

on the questionnaire indicating an improvement in the child's behavior. They will answer question 6 with the response A, question 7 with response D (see Appendix).

4. 32 of 40 parents will demonstrate a better understanding of effective parenting by answering questions 8 with one or more of the following responses: A, B, E, J, K (see Appendix).

5. 32 of 40 parents will learn efficient behavior modification strategies and will attest to successful implementation through a questionnaire at the end of the practicum. They will answer questions 9 with response A and question 10 with response A (see Appendix).

6. The last expected outcome was that out of the ten identified discipline problem students, all ten whose parents participated in the support group would exhibit an improvement in behavior measured.

The questionnaire does not require that the parents identify themselves so that they feel free to answer honestly and will not feel pressure to answer in a way they think the school wants them to. By allowing them to answer anonymously, the writer can expect valid results. The analyses of the results of the questionnaire and the student disciplinary report will be prepared in a series of bar graphs.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Parents, whose children were experiencing behavioral problems at school, were often at a loss as to how to effectively manage their child's behavior both in and out of the class. The goal of this practicum was to implement a parent support group to help parents improve their parenting skills. The literature suggests that the school and the parents are not solely responsible for the child's behavior. According to Palker (1980) the most efficient way to understand the individual needs of the child will come through close networking between the school, the parents, and the child. Moreover, day-to-day dealings with children should be guided by strong consideration of the particular circumstances of the child (Roddy, 1984). That is, understanding the child's home environment which may be uniquely influential on that child is imperative.

The school must find a comfortable position in influencing the home environment. Becoming involved in the parenting process will help facilitate the communication between teachers and parents, and ultimately, the parents will understand the benefits of becoming involved in their

child's school experience. Parent involvement is ongoing, changing development process which results in significant outcomes for all who participate (Ourth & Zakariya, 1982).

One solution can be found in encouraging age-appropriate activities for the child according to Lewis (1986). However, the inference in this claim is that by keeping a child on task, the teacher can prevent disruptive behavior. Most instructors can attest to the flaw in this conclusion recognizing that even the most engaging activity can't preclude disruptive behavior.

Educators, furthermore, must affirm the parents' self esteem and redefine the "ideal parent" (Edwards, 1992). Consequently, certain rules should be followed for all teacher conferences. Parents must see their child's good points first, thereby reinforcing the parents' self image (Weiser, 1982).

The time for pointing fingers at each other has ended. The schools and the parents need to work together to provide the means by which the students understand and accept the behavior parameters necessary for a healthy learning environment. Therefore, families play a vital role in supporting school improvement (Jackson & Cooper, 1992).

One solution may be providing a parent support group where families and educators work together to provide effective behavior modification strategies promoting positive discipline and consistency. According to Lamborn

et al. (1991) there exists a need to consider the joint and interactive effects of different dimensions of parental behavior most often combining an index of parental warmth, acceptance, or involvement with an index of parental control or strictness. For example, parents should not do what they think will necessarily please their children; they should promote self esteem and self discipline with a ratio of five parts praise to one part of criticism (Kunjufu, 1984). For example, according to Adams and Tidwell (1988) successful parents often chose a technique involving "discussion with explanation" while unsuccessful parents most often employed techniques involving behavior management techniques such as "scolding".

The support group must teach parents a means by which the parents can help their children become successful students through better behavior. Teachers should provide parents with support on how to develop their children's success (Chavkin, 1989). The common goal between teachers and parents is best met through a mutual understanding of what is best for the child.

The support group must also provide parents with a peer network. Parents must learn from each other ways to help their children progress through school (Delagado-Gaitan, 1991). By providing peer support, parents are positively reinforced when their achievements are recognized by others in the same way they are comforted when they see how their

problem is shared by others.

In addition, recognizing that speaking to parents isn't enough, teachers must provide pragmatic strategies. They must be willing to become actively involved and prove that the schools are willing to do much more than simply provide didactic lectures on parenting. According to Edwards (1992) teachers must encourage parent involvement through action, not words. A parent support group provides evidence of this willingness to become involved. According to Kazdin (1991) behavioral parent training is an effective intervention strategy with parents who have children with behavior problems.

The thrust of the support group should be teaching the importance of consistency. A key to effective discipline is consistency according to Lewis (1986). Acknowledging this important factor and implementing behavior modification in a consistent manner, the parents will give clear signals to their children, enabling them to adhere to boundaries more effectively. The helper relationship between home and school is essential according to Lewis (1986). Establishing boundaries helps a family organize into an effective hierarchy promoting good decision making and security according to Lewis (1986).

Description of Selected Solution

Before the implementation of a support group occurred,

the writer obtained an understanding of the home environment through a questionnaire. A thorough analysis of the familial system had to occur before a means of intervening could be determined (Lewis, 1986). In addition, teachers must recognize the changing nature of the American family. Educators must redefine "ideal parent" (Vandergritt & Greene, 1992). Consequently, an understanding must be developed between teacher and parent which will facilitate planning. Joint planning between teachers and parents is essential in modifying student behavior (Chavkin, 1989).

After the home environment was assessed, the writer reciprocated by providing the parents with an assessment of the school environment, especially the rules and regulations for behavior. Teachers should provide parents with an outline of expected behaviors in the classroom (Chavkin, 1989). Moreover, parents must be informed about the school system and how it functions (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991).

During this process, the writer taught cultural sensitivity to all the teachers. Since the support group represented multiple cultures, the writer contacted a member of that group and try to understand how their culture influences their home environment and how that cultural influence plays a part in behavior modification (Walker-Dalhouse, 1993). Educators must be trained in communicating with parents and understanding their cultural background (Chavkin, 1989).

The solution of creating a parent support group improved student classroom behavior by educating parents on effective behavior modification. Moreover, it provided a support network consisting of faculty and other parents. In addition, it educated parents on effective and efficient behavior modification techniques, provided written literature on effective behavior modification from various parenting and education publications.

The support group also broke through the silent barrier which many parents felt restricted their ability to ask for help. The group encouraged parents to listen to other parents, guest speakers, and school faculty. Furthermore, it facilitated communication among parents in reference to their problems, concerns, and successful disciplinary strategies with other parents, guest speakers, and school faculty.

It was necessary for adults to reinforce positive behavior can achieve the goal of developing self discipline within the child. That is, the child should be able to describe and analyze his or her own behavior. Self discipline, according to Kunjufu (1984) is predicated on the child being able to know the difference between right and wrong, and without consistent rules, this is impossible. In addition, the authors suggest that behavioral training has been shown to be an effective intervention for parents with children who have a wide range of these problems.

One part of the training was teaching positive disciple. According to Marion (1987) responsible adults who believe in the behavior approach to child guidance use a variety of positive techniques to change the child's behavior. Moreover, Hoy and Miskel (1982) maintain that the concept of reinforcement emerges as a crucial building block in a theory of behaviorism. In addition reinforcement involves the presentation of a consequence to change the strength of learned behavior. Therefore, behaviors act on the environment to produce consequences, which in turn, affect the intensity and frequency of individual behavior (Hughes & Wilson, 1989). Positive reinforcement strengthens behavior by adding a positive stimulus to the situation.

In the final analysis, the parents must accept the help which the schools may offer if the behavior is going to change. By networking together, the parents can learn better parenting skills which will improve not only their personal lives, but the family environment (Hale-Benson, 1986). The results of a more balanced family environment may transcend into the schools through better behavior patterns, thereby benefitting all parties.

Report of Action Taken

The author organized a school sponsored support group which would facilitate better behavior in students both in and out of school. The writer was confident the project would be successful because support groups for other problematic areas have had a high success rate (Fox et al., 1991). Moreover, parents had already indicated an interest in a parent support group, and the faculty had expressed support for the project.

After many interactions with parents, the writer had come to the conclusion that parents were not unwilling to learn; they just had had few opportunities. Thus, the writer was willing to provide the opportunity to learn. In doing so the writer took a series of steps. First, the writer generated a phone survey indicating how many parents would be interested in committing to the support group. At first, parents were invited to "parenting classes" but somehow that idea was distasteful to some parents who felt that they didn't need "classes". In response to this reaction, the writer referred to the classes as a "parenting support group" and received much more positive responses. Consequently, all references to the project were in terms of support group.

All parents were invited, not just those whose children had disciplinary records (Fox et al., 1991). Therefore, parents who had some successes were able to share their

stories as well, or parents who foresaw upcoming problems were able to circumvent them.

Secondly, the writer contacted via phone and school newsletter all interested parties indicating the time and place of the first meeting (Fox et al. 1991). Then a schedule and agenda were created for each of the meetings, and the writer was responsible for getting this information to the parents through a newsletter.

During the support group meetings, the parents learned how to teach their children prosocial behaviors (Wittner & Honig, 1994). Furthermore, parents learned how to teach their children problem solving methods and how to respond to conflict (Dinwiddie, 1994). Parents were also encouraged to recognize their goals and were provided with a powerful guide to use when determining which options to implement (Harris, 1994). Furthermore, parents were taught how important their influence and involvement is in their child's academic career (Stipek et al., 1994). In addition, parents were taught how to avoid "You against me" discipline (Betz, 1994). Lastly, parents were introduced to the STAR method of discipline (Fox et al., 1991). Some of the issues confronted were the effectiveness and ramifications of corporal punishment, development a child's self-esteem while implementing disciplinary measures, distribution of rewards and punishments, development of communication skills, encouragement of self-worth, stress management, and family

responsibilities and roles.

The meetings followed a consistent format which began with opening questions and discussion, a presentation by a guest speaker on the discipline topic of the evening. Some of the invited guests were a representative from Child Protective Services, a family counselor, a local minister, school administrator, and a representative from Child Crisis Center.

Moreover, the meetings were designed to encourage pragmatic application. Consequently, the parents engaged a variety of role-playing activities which allowed them to practice confronting and reacting to a variety of discipline problems. Thereby, they reinforced their motivation and confidence.

The last part of the meeting was set to entertain final comments and questions. This allowed parents to reaffirm their confidence and clarify any subject discussed during the meeting.

In preparation for the meetings, the writer contacted all guest speakers and provided resources and support literature, as well as snacks and refreshments, discovering how much more amenable people can be when food is provided.

In addition, the writer conducted all meetings and logged attendance. In addition, the writer provided a confidential question box so that parents could comfortably ask questions, in an non-threatening environment, or make

comments anonymously; the writer's intention was to address all questions and comments in the newsletter; however, parents did not submit questions in this format. Rather, they wanted to discuss questions at the meetings so as to get a more immediate response.

Finally, the writer created a monthly newsletter summarizing the content of the meetings and sent it to all parents who were interested in receiving it, whether they attended the meetings or not (Lewis, 1986). Although the hope was that this might generate new interest and more parents would choose to get involved, the same thirty parents consistently attended.

For the final analysis, the writer created and evaluated questionnaires for the parents measuring their success at the implementation of the effective and efficient behavior modification strategies taught in the support group. Then the writer compared the parents' attendance records, the academic records, and student disciplinary records at the end of the practicum, making final evaluations from the aforementioned data.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

In response to parents, whose children were experiencing behavioral problems at school, were often at loss as to how to effectively manage their child's behavior both in and out of the home, a parenting support group was organized. This group was designed to facilitate positive discipline in the home, with the assumption that the effects of the behavior modification would transcend into the school environment. The parents were instructed on the practical application of behavior modification strategies and given the opportunity to express both their concerns and their experiences. The measure of the group's success was determined by evaluating the change in children's behavior and the responses of parents in reference to the experience of participating in the parenting support group.

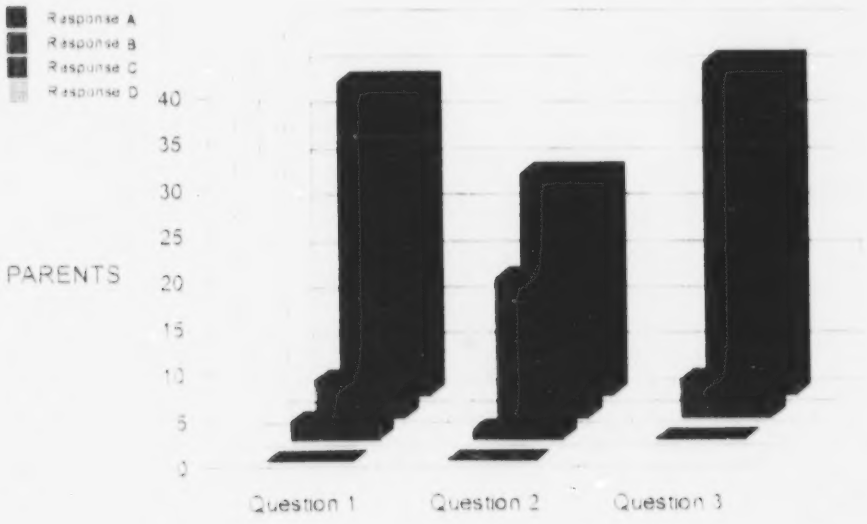
The expected outcomes were as follows:

1. At least 32 of 40 parents will benefit from the support

group. 32 parents will answer question 1 with response A; they will answer question 2 with responses A or B; they will answer question 3 with response A (see Appendix).

All aforementioned goals were met. See figure 1.

Figure 1 Parents' responses to questions 1, 2, and 3.



2. At least 32 of 40 parents with children who exhibit behavior problems will effectively alter their children's emotional reactions as evidenced by the parent's reaction to questions 4 and 5 on the questionnaire. 32 parents will answer question 4 with response B or C and answer question 5 with response A, B, or C. All aforementioned goals were met. See figure 2.

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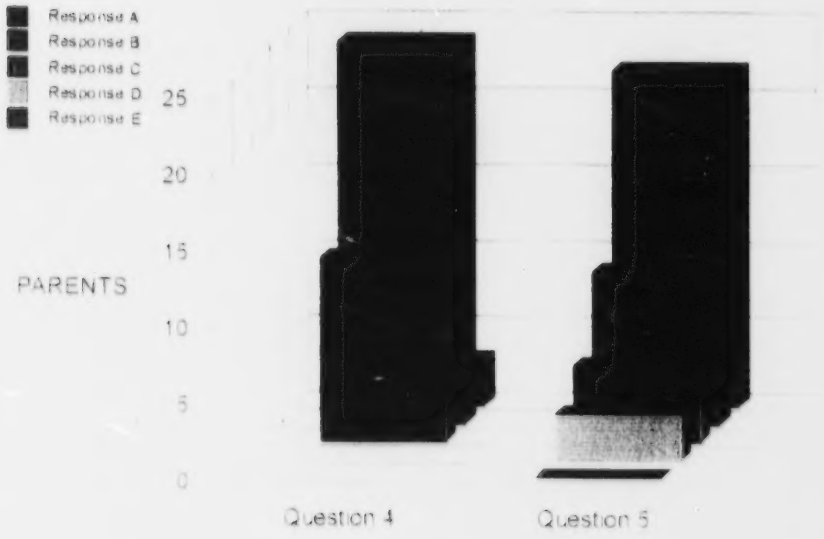
Figure 2 Parents' responses to questions 4 and 5.



3. At least 32 of the 40 parents will implement effective behavior modification at home measured by parent responses on the questionnaire indicating an improvement in the child's behavior. They will answer question 6 with the response A, question 7 with response D. These goals were not met optimally. 22 of the subjects answered question 6 with response B, and only 17 answered with response A. In reference to question 7, only 12 subjects chose response D while the remaining 28 chose either A, B, or C. See figure 3.

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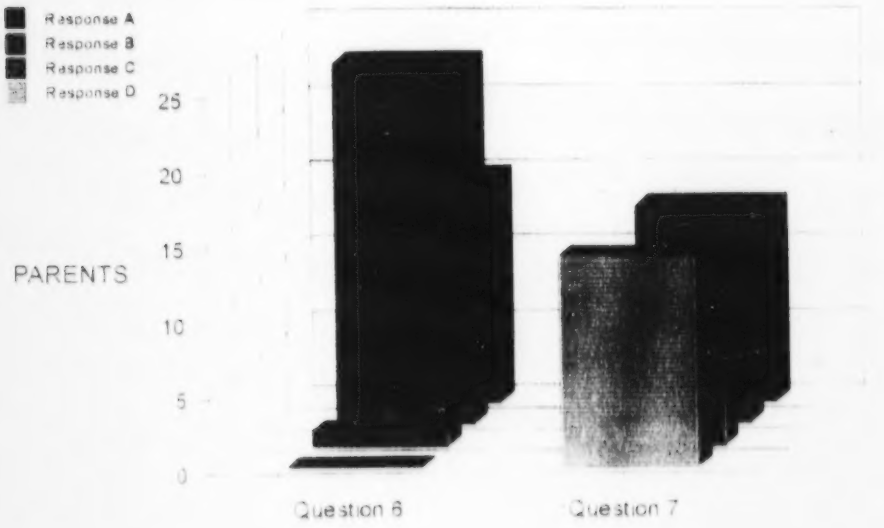
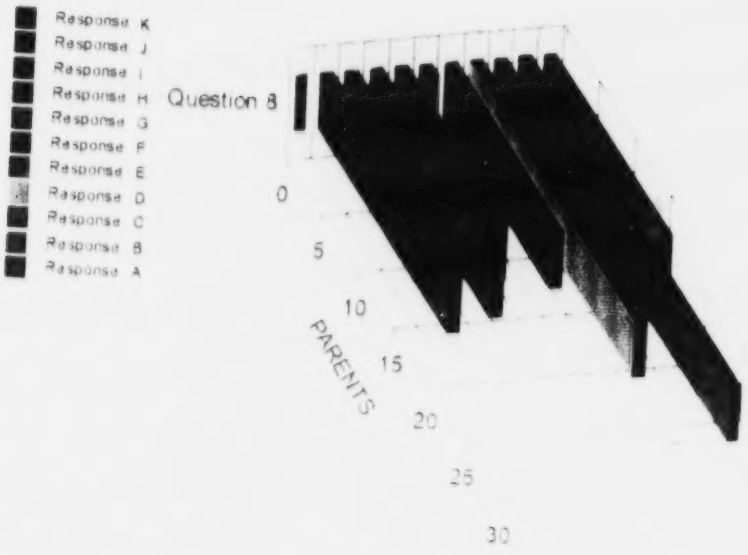
Figure 3 Parents' response to questions 6 and 7.



4. At least 32 of 40 parents would demonstrate a better understanding of effective parenting by answering questions 8 with one or more of the following responses: A, B, D, E, J, K. All aforementioned goals were met. See figure 4.

Figure 4 Parents' response to question 8.



5. At least 32 of 40 parents will learn efficient behavior modification strategies and will attest to successful implementation through a questionnaire at the end of the practicum. They will answer questions 9 with response A and question 10 with response A. Although the goal of 10 was met, the 22 subjects chose response A for question 9 while the remaining 18 chose response B. See figure 5.

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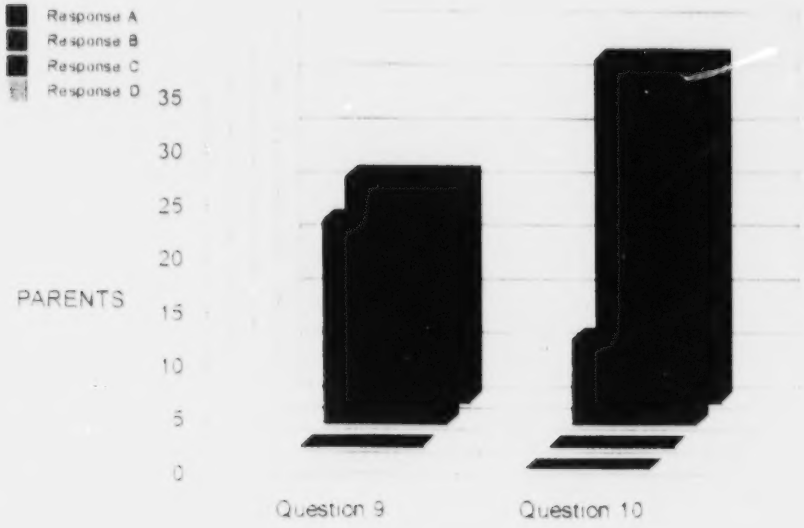
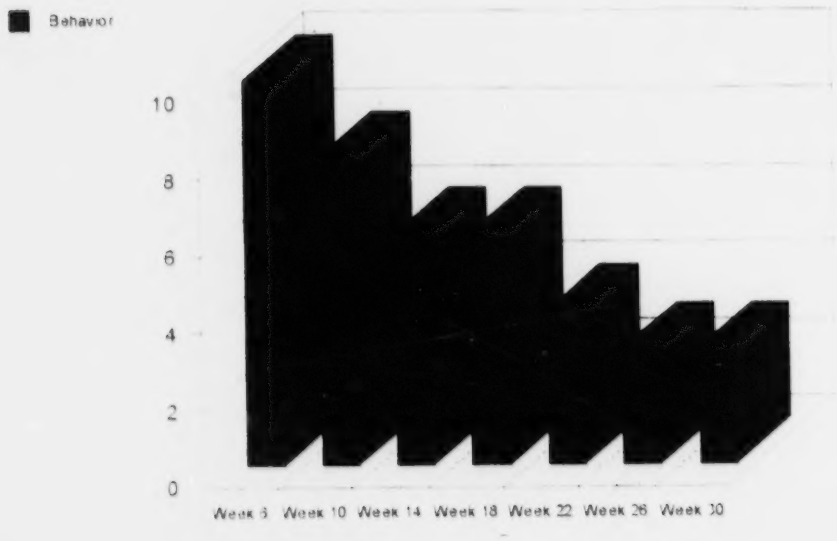
Figure 5 Parents' responses to question 9.



6. The last expected outcome was that out of the ten identified discipline problem students, all ten whose parents participated in the support group would exhibit an improvement in behavior measured. All aforementioned goals were met. See figure 6.

Figure 6 Comparison of pre-support group discipline record to post-support group discipline record.



Discussion

The writer was satisfied with the parents' response to question 1 as the majority of parents felt that the group offered practical solutions with easy application, indicating success. Even those parents who indicated that the group offered solutions with no real method as to how to apply the solutions might be responding to the fact that all solutions were oral and maybe the parents forgot them.

In reference to question 2, parents indicated that they felt at least some emotional support; most indicated a high

level of support. The writer feels satisfied that even if the parents did not feel empowered with practical solutions, they found some benefit in the group activity. Certainly, the emotional response to the group cannot be dismissed in light of the fact that a few parents did not think it was practical. This is evidenced by their continued support. Moreover, an overwhelming number of parents found the support group a positive experience as indicated by their responses to question 3. One reason why parents may not have felt as strongly about the group's usefulness in controlling their children's behavior as they did about its contribution to their emotional state is a failure on their part to fully buy into the program. Like the chemically dependent individual who understands and accepts the principles offered in a twelve-step program and then finds himself abusing when away from the group, parents also find strength in numbers which may be lost once they leave.

As evidenced by figure 2, most of the parents responded by indicating either that their child showed some emotional reaction but it was short term or that their child reacted calmly or neutrally in response to discipline. More parents indicated that in response to discipline, their child shows some emotional reactions, but the reactions are primarily short term. This is the most anticipated answer as emotional reactions for children are normal, but the fact that they work themselves out of it is what is important.

Furthermore, for those parents whose children reacted calmly or neutrally, obviously the discipline ritual has become routine and the child thoroughly understands the behavior parameters. The fact that the child responds at all reflects the effectiveness of the discipline method, which reflects commitment to consistency on the part of the parents. Moreover, in response to question 5, all the parents indicated an improvement in emotional reaction at the very least some of the time. This of course was the ultimate goal, and the writer is satisfied with any improvement as the parents now have the tools to work on developing that improvement. With less of a volatile reaction, the child can more clearly comprehend the consequences of his or her behavior which is the first step to improving the behavior.

In response to question 6, the writer was hoping for more A responses than were indicated since A represents immediate response of the child to the behavior modification whereas B, the alternative most parents chose, indicates an appropriate response from the child but after some time and some testing. However, this is not surprising as most parents are new at consistent discipline, and creating a firm belief system in children takes time. If the parents have wavered up until this time, it is not surprising that the child will try to step up to and test the line. The important consideration is that the child eventually

submitted which is the first step in establishing consistent boundaries.

Question 7 presents some interesting results. Although the author anticipated that the parents would respond with alternative D, indicating the child's acceptance of responsibility as a result of a conflict, the responses are almost evenly split among D, C, and A. Some parents indicated that conflict resulted in a reasonable negotiation which indicates again their wavering commitment to consistency in implementation. However, many parents felt that negotiation is an improvement to the previous chaotic and unreasonable responses. Most disturbing is that many parents still allow power struggles to ensue which indicates their inability to maintain control of the situation. The child evidently has figured out how to wear some of the parents down if they feel that a power struggle is even an option.

In reference to which behavior modification strategies parents most often implemented as asked by question 8, time out was overwhelmingly the more popular choice and certainly the anticipated options of limit setting, revoking privileges, choice setting, and record keeping also had a good showing which indicates a movement toward more positive discipline strategies. However, contracting was not chosen at all. This failure to initiate contracts may be due to the time-consuming nature of this alternative. Many parents

may be unwilling to commit such time, especially if the behavior infraction was not severe. About six parents still chose to implement corporal punishment which indicates a level of comfort with that which is familiar. This corresponds with the number of parents who indicated on question 1 that the group offered no real practical solutions. Future studies may correlate question 1 responses with question 8 responses to see if the same parents who chose not to implement positive discipline strategies are the same parents who remained unaffected by the group.

Question 9 was a trick question. In asking parents how consistent they are in their behavior modification, the writer understands that only alterative A (consistent) and alternative C (inconsistent) are logical as alternative B represents an impossible situation: to be fairly consistent. Interestingly, the responses were almost evenly split between alternative A and alternative B with none of the parents indicating "inconsistent". However, alternative "fairly consistent" is in truth a statement of "inconsistent" and may attest to some of the problematic areas indicated in previous questions, for example, the power struggles and the testing behavior.

In reference to question 10 the majority answered with the expected outcome of having changed the nature of conflict in the home and empowering parents to control their

children. Five parents, however, indicated a positive response but saw no difference in their child's behavior which probably indicates a lack of consistent implementation. The response is analogous to children failing to do their homework because "it was too hard" and not understanding why they are not mastering the subject. The most important result is that parents feel more empowered. By feeling more empowered they have taken the first step in implementing effective discipline strategies in the home. Simply by feeling empowered presents the parents with a Pygmalion perspective; that is, because they feel they can control their children's behavior, they fulfill their own prophecy and the children respond accordingly. Hopefully this alone may serve as the impetus to a long-term cycle of change.

The questionnaire did not require that the parents identify themselves so that they felt free to answer honestly and did not feel pressure to answer in a way they think the school wants them to. By allowing them to answer anonymously, the writer can expect valid results.

Since this project was stimulated by behavior problems evidenced in the classroom, the writer expected the behavior of those children whose parents participated in the support group to improve in the school setting as well. Initially there were ten identified "behavior problem students" whose parents regularly attended the group. All ten had

discipline records as they had all been sent to the principal's office during the first 3 weeks of school. By the end of the year, only 3 had been sent and the nature of the behavior problem was dramatically less severe. Obviously there is some opportunity for behavior change at home to manifest itself at school. However, the correlation between behavior at home and behavior at school cannot be assessed with 100% accuracy. What parents claim is happening in the home may not be; even an anonymous response may be mitigated.

Although the writer anticipated fewer than 3 students needing discipline action in school, the writer is satisfied that the nature of the problems were less severe. For example, the students before the support group were sent to the office for inappropriate behavior such as biting, fighting, and talking back, behaviors which certainly needed modification. The types of infraction experienced after the support group were minor in comparison, for example, inattentiveness and failure to stay on task. Future studies may choose to log and categorize types of inappropriate behavior and conduct analysis which considers degrees of severity in misconduct.

In general, the support group was successful. Not all expectations were met to the optimal degree, but the parents felt empowered, the children's behavior improved somewhat, and the community became more knowledgeable about discipline

and its effectiveness. Any support group of this nature must remain somewhat flexible as every community has different needs, and the needs may not be anticipated, but certainly should take precedence over any pre-established agenda.

Recommendations

Some parents had difficultly in implementing the strategies discussed once they left the support group as evidenced by their responses to the survey. Providing solutions and methods for application of behavior modification in written form for parents to which parents can refer may empower parents more effectively.

Obviously there was a problem with the strategy implementation stage of the practicum. Although the parents indicated a positive emotional reaction, some felt incapable of maintaining that energy once they left the group. In response to this lack of follow through on the parents' part, the facilitator could have taken a more of an intervention role. That is, the school might have provided counseling for parents who are identified as "at risk" parents. These parents are those who are determined to use corporal punishment, have children with continual discipline problems, or who might attend the group irregularly. By providing counseling, the at risk parents might have been more receptive to, consequently more effective in,

implementing positive discipline strategies, and they may have responded to the survey in a more desirable way. Recognizing this, the school might have offered peer counseling whereby the parents who have a problem with implementation could reach out for help at the moment of the problem. Consequently, they would have had an outside resource to reach out to much like the crisis hot line available to individuals in recovery. This may have resulted in more positive attitudes about the practical nature of the support group.

In reference to question 6, although the parents indicated a desirable response, the majority did not select the response expected as many children continued to test the parents' commitment. The writer recommends, therefore, that the school follow up on the parenting support group through individual contacts with the parents. That is, parents need to feel continual support so that the timeliness in which their child responds to their discipline methods might be improved through long term and consistent implementation motivated by continual support.

Moreover, as evidenced by question 7 on the survey, parents need a course on maintaining their role as the authority figure. Too often parents allowed the control to shift which indicates a need for a basic parenting and authority class. Furthermore, more time needed to be spent on the individual behavior modification strategy. Some

parents neglected to choose some alternatives because the difficulty in implementation. With more detailed analysis and practice in implementing through role playing, parents would find the value of a wide range of alternatives which would best suit the needs of the particular occasion sa one strategy will not work in all situations. More emphasis also needs to be put on turning away from corporal punishment and violence of any type within the home. The writer regretted that the time constraints did not allow for a broader view of discipline. An extended arm of the parenting group might have provided the opportunity to parents to visit other facilities which are directly related to discipline in reference to hitting or hurting another individual. For example, parents might have learned a great deal by visiting the Child Crisis Center, the Juvenile Detention Center, and Shelters for battered individuals.

One of the most important recommendations is in reference to the concept of consistency. This seems to be the axis on which all other problems revolve. Parents need one whole course defining, describing, and emphasizing consistency, thereby reminding them that there is no such thing as being fairly consistent. In fact, in the writer's opinion, the concept of consistency should be the underlying theme of all other topics addressed in the support group.

The behavior of ten "discipline-problem" children was used to measure the effects of the parenting support group

in the classroom. A helpful assessment might have been derived by charting the behavior records of all the children whose parents attended, but since not all the participants were parents of problematic children, the results would have been interesting but may have yielded insignificant results.

Some other considerations stem from a general analysis of the practicum. Although the support group was a positive and successful experience, some different approaches may have drawn a greater number of people and stimulated a greater effect. The meetings were held once a month. During the month, parents experienced a great number of emotions. Therefore, by the time they came to the meeting, they had much to say, more than was manageable in one hour. Consequently, the writer suggests that the parents meet at least bi-monthly, and depending on the number of participants, possibly weekly meetings might have fulfilled the parents' needs more efficiently. It is important to control the number of the participants so that all who attend may voice their opinions, questions, and concerns. Sometimes the group had too many voices going at once and controlling the discussion became problematic.

Moreover, as parents become involved, they suggested that they might be allowed to participate actively in the decision making. That is, they could decide which topics needed to be addressed and suggest guest speakers whom they consider to be helpful. The writer would like to encourage

this active participation by allowing the parents to assume a more controlling role.

Furthermore, some parents questioned whether they were the only parents experiencing these problems. It occurred to the writer that networking with other parenting groups might have allowed the parents to understand how pervasive their problems were within the community as a whole. This would have been especially useful when guest speakers charged a fee or were difficult to schedule.

Also, in order to maximize the effectiveness of the parenting support group, parents should have been informed about and encouraged to attend the support group at the first sign of a discipline problem. The only parents who were required to come were those who had children with a long disciplinary record. Consequently, parents of children with only one or two infractions were invited but not authoritatively encouraged to come. This strategy may have identified potential problems; thus, early intervention could have impeded recursive behavior more efficiently.

In addition, the students might have been better affected if they understood the close network between the teachers and the parents. Therefore, the children should also have received some training in reference to behavior management which was consistent with the strategies taught in the support group. This kind of consistency would have given them clearer boundaries so they were fully aware of

the responsibilities and ramifications of their actions.

Lastly, in order to promote the success of the parenting support group, there should have been a consistent line of communication not only between parents and teachers but among teachers as well. Therefore, the school should have provided training to all of its teachers in behavior modification. The school needed to adopt a general principle of discipline, and all the teachers should have been instructed in how to implement it as many of the parents had children in a number of different grades. The teachers should have addressed discipline concerns in faculty meetings. By providing a unified front, the school would have promoted confidence in the parents and the students, which might have encouraged a more full acceptance of the ideas presented.

Dissemination

As Director of Early Childhood Development, the project and results will be shared first with the other educators within the community where the study took place. The writer then plans to publish and distribute the study to other elementary professionals with the objective that other teachers and administrators can emulate the project as discipline seems to be pervasive problem in all school districts regardless of geographic and socioeconomic factors. The data and analysis will be submitted to

scholarly journals which target educators, primarily those at the elementary level.

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APPENDIX

POST SUPPORT GROUP SURVEY

POST PARENT SUPPORT GROUP SURVEY

Dear Parents:

This survey is designed to measure the school's success in implementing our parent support group. Your honest responses will help us provide quality instruction in the future. Your participation has been greatly appreciated.

1. PLEASE INDICATE HOW BENEFICIAL THE SUPPORT GROUP WAS IN PROVIDING PRACTICAL BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION STRATEGIES.

A. The group offered practical solutions with easy application.

B. The group offered solutions but with no real method as to how to apply the solution.

C. The group offered very few practical solutions.

D. The group offered no practical solutions.

2. PLEASE INDICATE THE LEVEL OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT YOU FELT IN THE GROUP.

A. I felt a high level of support and was affected positively By it.

B. I felt a moderate level of support and was somewhat affected.

C. I felt no strong support from the group.

D. I felt negative reactions and judgement from the group.

3. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR OVERALL REACTION TO PARTICIPATING IN THE GROUP.

A. Overall the group was a positive experience.

B. Overall participating in the group was an average experience with no profound effect.

C. Overall participating in the group was a negative experience and/or a waste of time.

4. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES.

A. My child shows intense negative reactions to discipline such as aggression and long term withdrawal.

B. My child shows some emotional reactions but the reactions are primarily short term.

C. My child reacts calmly or neutrally in response to discipline.

5. PLEASE INDICATE THE LEVEL OF CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL REACTION TO DISCIPLINE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

A. My child's emotional reaction is significantly better.

B. My child's emotional reaction is somewhat better.

C. My child's emotional reaction is better some of the time.

D. There is no change in my child's emotional reaction.

E. My child's emotional reaction has worsened.

6. PLEASE INDICATE THE LEVEL OF CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR.

A. My child responds immediately to behavior modification.

B. My child tests my commitment to behavior modification but submits after some time.

C. My child tests my commitment to behavior modification and refuses to submit.

D. My child ignores my attempts at behavior modification.

7. PLEASE INDICATE THE NATURE OF CONFLICTS IN YOUR HOME.

A. Conflict results in a power struggle.

B. Conflict results in exhausting negotiations.

C. Conflict results in reasonable negotiation.

D. Conflict results in choice making and acceptance of responsibility (child's self discipline).

8. PLEASE INDICATE THE STRATEGIES OF BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION WHICH YOU REGULARLY IMPLEMENT.

A. Limit setting

B. Time out

C. Corporal punishment

D. Revoking privileges

E. Choice Setting

F. Banishment to another part of the house

G. Grounding

H. Negotiating

I. Diverting the child's attention

J. Record keeping

K. Contracting

9. HOW CONSISTENT ARE YOU IN YOUR BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION?

A. Consistent

B. Fairly consistent

C. Inconsistent

10. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE OVERALL SUCCESS OF THE SUPPORT GROUP IN REFERENCE TO PROVIDING EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, PRAGMATIC AND EFFICIENT BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION STRATEGIES.

A. The support group has changed greatly the nature of conflict in my home. I feel empowered to control my child's behavior.

B. The support group was beneficial, but I see little change in my child's behavior at home.

C. The support group was OK but I was not able to implement the behavior modification strategies as suggested because of difficulty and/or time.

D. The support group was informative but resulted in little or no change in my home.

E. The support group did not offer any real solutions.